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SUBJECT: Ambassador dedicates English Language Lab
at Djiboutian Military Headquarters

1. (U) SUMMARY: On September 21, the Ambassador dedicated an English language laboratory and library at Camp Cheik Osman, the Djiboutian Military headquarters. The project was funded by the Embassy's Foreign Military Financing (FMF) fund. The project is intended to aid cooperation between the U.S. and Djiboutian militaries, and between Djibouti and other militaries in the Horn of Africa, by teaching basic, professionally-specific English to officers and enlisted soldiers. END SUMMARY

2. On September 21, the Ambassador, Brigade General Zakaria Cheikh Ibrahim and the Embassy's U.S. Liaison Officer (USLO) dedicated an American Embassy-funded English language laboratory and library at Camp Cheik Osman, the Djiboutian Military headquarters. The computerized language laboratory was equipped with USD 30,000 of FMF funds. It is intended to provide basic English language skills to officers and enlisted Djiboutian military personnel and will be operated over the next 90 days by a temporary duty language instructor from the U.S. military who specializes in English as a Second Language (ESL). The instructor will train Djiboutian English instructors in ESL techniques. USLO is currently searching for another American to fill the slot after 90 days. The laboratory has 30 computers, internet connectivity and is expected to service about 250 soldiers per quarter.

3. In her dedication speech, the Ambassador highlighted the importance of English to Djibouti, not only for cooperation with Americans, but also as the common language of the Horn of Africa. It is vital to regional stability and development, she said, that Djibouti is able to cooperate, communicate and share expertise with its neighbors.

4. General Zakaria, in his turn, said that the objective of the laboratory and library is the learning and perfection of English for all categories of military personnel. Zakaria added that the laboratory enhances the level of cooperation between the United States and Djibouti, and especially between the two armies.